

from the desk of
the Director



Luz Araoz Hopewell,
Director of the Office
of Small and Disad-
vantaged Business
Utilization

As we say farewell to Secretary Peña, the staff at OSDBU thanks him for his continuing support of small business over the last four years.

In January, the Secretary met with our staff to say good-bye and presented Certificates of appreciation to two close affiliates of the OSDBU. The Latin Chamber of Commerce of Miami, FL received a certificate "in recognition for providing and achieving high quality customer service to small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses for the U.S. Department of Transportation."

Also, Francine Savitt received a certificate "in recognition of superior accomplishments in providing national access for small businesses to surety bonds for U.S. Department of Transportation projects" for her former position as vice president of the Midwest Indemnity Corporation.

The Secretary congratulates both these awardees and all the staff members at OSDBU who have worked hard during the past four years.

Secretary Peña, we thank you for four terrific years with the Department of Transportation. We are proud to have been affiliated with you, and wish you the best of luck in all your future endeavors!

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program Soliciting New Contractors for 1997

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) Solicitation is scheduled for release both in hard copy and on the Internet. The DOT SBIR has awarded over \$50 million in contracts to small businesses nationwide.

In 1996 alone there were 30 Phase I contract awards to firms located in Ari-

zona, Colorado, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and eight other states. These contracts will support the missions of the Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Research and Special Programs Admin-

Continued on page 2

Rodney Slater Nominated Next Secretary of Transportation

President Clinton announced December 20, 1996 that Federal Highway Administrator Rodney E. Slater will be his nominee for Secretary of Transportation to replace Secretary Federico Peña.

Said President Clinton: "I am proud to nominate...Rodney Slater [for Secretary of Transportation]. First, as the Chair of the State Highway Commission

in our home state, and then as Federal Highway Administrator, Rodney Slater has managed large programs with skill and high standards. He has rebuilt and expanded our nation's highways and linked isolated communities to jobs and opportunities. He has built bridges both of steel and of goodwill to bring people closer together.

Continued on page 3

Wide Diversity of Firms Marketing to DOT

Visit to Three California Businesses Firms Shows the Variety of Industries Marketing Their Products and Technologies to DOT

On a recent visit to California for the San Diego Transportation Marketplace conference, DOT-OSDBU officials met with three small businesses to advise them on methods of marketing their products to the DOT. Representatives of prime federal contractors and state and local departments of transportation also offered the firms marketing advice.

The profiles that follow show the wide scope of firms that are marketing to the DOT.

FRONT EDGE TECHNOLOGY: SUPER-TOUGH COATINGS

Front Edge Technology, Inc., located in Baldwin Park, CA, is an Asian-owned firm which manufactures wear-

Continued on page 2

Marketing to DOT Continued from page 1

and corrosion-resistant coatings and coatings systems. The coating technology involves depositing thin films (microns, nanometers) of very hard materials (titanium nitride, diamond-like carbon) on the surfaces of parts and components that are subject to high wear and/or corrosion. These coatings can help parts last up to 10 times longer than normal parts.

Front Edge is just emerging from a two-year R&D cycle, and is now ready to offer its services and systems to government and industry. Company founder and President Dr. Simon Nieh says this technology has direct applications in the transportation industry, which is fraught with high wear and corrosion problems. For instance, this new technology can be used for:

- Thin coatings for the new generation of thin-plate lithium batteries
- Super-tough coatings for stronger, quieter gears for electric cars
- Coatings for wear and abrasion protection of many transportation-related components, such as ball bearings, gears, pistons, and valves
- Corrosion protection of freeway signs to enhance their longevity
- Rail car wheel bearings

G.S. DUNBAR:

GARMENT MANUFACTURING

G.S. Dunbar and Co. is an 8(a) Hispanic-woman-owned garment manufacturing company located in Montebello, CA. Founded in 1967 by Esther and Gary Dunbar, the company provides quality garments at competitive prices with a high degree of flexibility. Currently,

annual production is at approximately 1.5 million units. In order to match demand, the company plans to expand its capacity to 3 million units in the next two years.

G.S. Dunbar employs 185 people, many of whom are Mexican immigrants who, with little training, have had difficulty finding a job. The company has earned an excellent reputation for quality work and on-time delivery, which is evident from the outstanding capability survey rating it received from the Defense Logistics Agency.

John Kyle, marketing consultant for G.S. Dunbar and President of Kyle Consulting, Inc., said the company is seeking a contract to manufacture uniforms for the U.S. Coast Guard. Kyle said the Coast Guard, among other DOT modes, has an extensive MBE set-aside program.

When asked what advice he would give to other small businesses attempting to market to the DOT, Kyle said: "Companies should first get a copy of the Procurement Forecast [DOT document which lists contract opportunities for the coming year]. Then they should identify the small business representative [or liaison], and work from there."

PHOTON RESOURCES: VIDEO CONFERENCING ON THE INTERNET

Photon Resources, Inc., with offices in Hollywood, CA and Bethesda, MD, is the brainchild of two high-tech inventors, Sylvia Blanco and Byron Wagner. The 8(a) Hispanic-woman-owned business (owned by Blanco) is at the forefront of its field—video conferencing.

Video conferencing allows two or

more people to talk, conduct a meeting, or otherwise communicate over the phone while seeing each other on a video screen simultaneously. According to Blanco, this will allow both businesses and government to drastically reduce the cost of traveling to and from meetings, since employees will be able to "attend" without leaving their offices.

Photon Resources is unique in that it has developed software which allows for video conferencing picture quality equal to that of broadcast television, transmitted over the Internet. Using proprietary algorithms, Blanco's partner, Byron Wagner, invented a method of transmitting video up to 27 frames per second over the Internet.

Said Blanco: "Our 27 frames per second video technology is unique. Even the best comparable solutions transmit at 4-5 frames per second. The combination of clarity and speed we have developed would give users the ability to analyze X-rays, perform surgery, and do other intricate procedures and analyses using video conferencing.

"Video conferencing can dramatically cut communications and travel costs up to 30-40% or more. We can use any existing video conferencing equipment an organization might have and incorporate it into the solution—so they don't have to throw anything away."

Photon Resources has also developed audio conferencing technology which would make long distance phone calls essentially free.

Blanco said she has made contacts at the FAA, FHWA, and U.S. Coast Guard as well as many private companies in marketing her product.

SBIR Solcitation Continued from page 1

istration.

The topic areas of past contracts have embraced critical needs of the DOT, including aircraft safety, aviation security, information technology, traffic safety, water quality, train and truck safety, and infrastructure improvements.

The 1997 SBIR Program will again

solicit research topics which focus on the Departments' priorities in the areas of air technology, aircraft safety, highway structures, traffic safety, railroad safety, transit maintenance, and infrastructure improvements. There is a potential for up to 40 small businesses nationwide to receive Phase I contracts in these topic

areas.

To access information regarding the SBIR, go to <http://www.volpe.dot.gov>. To request hard copy, send a fax to (617) 494-2497. Mail proposals to DOT Volpe Center (DTS-22), Kendall Square, Cambridge, MA, 02142. The closing date for receipt of proposals is May 1, 1997.

News Briefs

DOT-OSDBU Website Improved, Expanded

New Site Includes Extended Version of Transportation Link

The Department of Transportation's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization website underwent redesigning and content improvement as Base Technologies, the company which produces this newsletter, took over design and maintenance of the site. The new site includes both aesthetic improvement and expansion of content.

Among these improvements, Transportation Link will appear in an extended format. Readers will be able to view this newsletter in a plain-text format or download it in the Adobe Acrobat PDF format. The latter provides an exact copy of the printed version, complete with colors and layout, which users can read on their computer monitors or print out.

The menu for the new website includes:

- Description of OSDBU's programs
- Legislative Issues
- The Marketing Information Package available for download

• Procurement Forecast and Subcontracting Report available in text form or for download

- Links to transportation and small and minority business-related sites
- Transportation Link with extended information
- Frequently Asked Questions
- A feedback form for users to make comments about the site or OSDBU

Miami Transportation Marketplace to Be Held April 1

Event to Bring Contractors in Contact with Transportation Contract Opportunities

The Miami Transportation Marketplace, sponsored by USDOT, will be held at the Crowne Plaza Miami, Biscayne Bay Hotel on April 1, 97 from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

There will be a variety of exhibitors, including Metro Dade County, Miami International Airport, and a host of DOT agencies.

The address of the hotel is Biscayne Blvd. at 16th Street, Miami, FL 33132. For more information, contact Nelson Quiñones at 1-800-522-6623.

Peña Agrees to Serve as Secretary of Energy

After announcing he would step down as Secretary of Transportation in order to spend more time with his family and in the private sector, Federico Peña accepted President Clinton's request to serve as Secretary of Energy.

Peña accepted the nomination at the last minute. Several of Clinton's advisors persuaded him to accept the night before the President announced his new cabinet nominees.

As Secretary of Transportation, Peña helped increase the global competitiveness of the transportation industry and streamlined DOT. Peña signed aviation agreements with 40 nations, opening lucrative markets for American airlines and cargo carriers. He conducted commercial diplomacy efforts around the world, and is credited with helping American businesses sell billions of dollars in exports to Asia and the Middle East. Peña downsized the work force by 11,000 positions, while upsizing investments in infrastructure by 10 percent. He also led the way for cities to use new technologies to manage traffic congestion.

Slater Nominated *Continued from page 1*

"When the North Ridge earthquake struck California with such deadly force, Rodney led our effort to rebuild vital highways in record time...Along with his own family, I have watched with pride as he has built his own road to success."

Mr. Slater has served as Federal Highway Administrator since 1993. During his tenure, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has provided record levels of investment in the nation's infrastructure. In response to a presidential directive, the FHWA developed an innovative financing program which has thus far enabled more than \$5 billion worth of projects to move toward construction more quickly.

On November 28, 1995, President Clinton signed the National Highway



System (NHS) Designation Act, one of the most important pieces of transpor-

tation legislation since President Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. The NHS, which includes the current Interstate system as well as other key roads, will bring the benefits of the Interstate system to those areas not now served by it. Just as the Interstate System was the backbone of the nation's current highway network, the NHS will be the cornerstone of America's 21st century transportation system.

Since becoming FHWA Administrator, Mr. Slater has traveled more than 300,000 miles in 40 states.

Before coming to the FHWA, Mr. Slater was chairman of the Arkansas

continued on page 4

State Highway Commission in 1992-93 and a commissioner from 1987-92. He was executive assistant to then-Governor Clinton from 1983-87 and assistant attorney general for the state of Arkansas from 1980-82.

Mr. Slater has received numerous awards and honors, including the Arkansas Transit Association's "Arkansas Public Transportation Advocate Award." Arkansas Times magazine named him an "Arkansas Hero" for his work to improve the Mississippi Delta region of Arkansas.

Mr. Slater is a 1977 graduate of Eastern Michigan University and a 1980 graduate of the University of Arkansas School of Law. He is a native of Marianna, Arkansas. Mr. Slater and his wife, Cassandra Wilkins, have a daughter, Bridgette Josette.

President Clinton closed his nomination of Mr. Slater with humor: "I can say that he was recommended by more people from more places in more ways for this job than any person for any position I have ever seen. And in spite of that, I am confident that he will be a superb and successful Secretary of Transportation."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST TO M/WBES FEBRUARY/MARCH/APRIL 1997

| Date | Event | Location | Contact |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|---|
| February 15-16 | Asian American Inventors & Entrepreneurs Conference Presented by CATE Development | San Jose, CA | (408) 297-3587 |
| February 17 | Fast Trac II, a nine-week course for aspiring entrepreneurs Presented by the East Bay Outreach Project | Berkeley, CA | (510) 643-0923 |
| February 24-28 | Lead-Based Paint Abatement Training Sponsored by the National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC) | San Diego, CA | (202) 347-8259 |
| February 24-28 | Superfund Hazardous Waste Management Training Sponsored by the NAMC | Winston-Salem, NC | (202) 347-8259 |
| February 24, 26 | The Business Plan: Planning for Business Success Workshop Women's Business Development Center | Chicago, IL | (312) 853-3477 |
| February 25 | 8th Annual Mini-Expo '96 Sponsored by the Golden Triangle Minority Business Council | Beaumont, TX | (409) 835-0151 |
| March 9-12 | APTA Legislative Conference Sponsored by the American Public Transit Association | Washington, DC | (202) 898-4108 |
| March 19-21 | 5th Black Entrepreneurship in America Conference Sponsored by Dow Jones & Company, The Wall Street Journal and OUR WORLD NEWS | Baltimore, MD | Donna Bradley fax: (212) 597-5990 dbradley@wsj.dowjones.com |
| March 24-28 | Superfund Hazardous Waste Management Training Sponsored by the NAMC | Minneapolis, MN | (202) 347-8259 |
| April 1 | Miami Transportation Marketplace Sponsored by USDOT | Miami FL | Nelson Quiñones (800) 522-6623 |

Visit the new   information?
Transportation Link page on the World Wide Web!
<http://www.dotinfo/ost/osdbu/translink/translink.html>

US Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
Base Technologies, Inc.
1749 Old Meadow Road
Suite 500
McLean, VA 22102
Address Correction Requested